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VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

TO THE

GRADUATING CLASS

OF THE

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

OF

The University of California,

For 1877.

BY

PROFESSOR GEORGE HEWSTON, A.M., M.D.

Professor of Theory and Practice of Medicine in the University of California; formerly Professor of Anatomy in the Philadelphia College of Medicine; Life Member of the Franklin Institute and Academy of Sciences of Philadelphia; and Member of the American Medical Association.

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ADDRESS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS:

I have been selected by my colleagues to address you on this momentous occasion. I am conscious of the importance of these few, fleeting moments. We are to separate as teacher and pupil. You are about to launch out in a new and open sea, the sea of life, the life of a medical man. The future may appear bright to most of you; the long dreaded ordeal of the examination has passed, and you have been found worthy to receive the honorable degree of Doctor in Medicine, from the hands of the Regents of the University of California, an institution of which you should be proud, and whose good name will be in a degree in your keeping, and I trust that no one graduate of the Medical Class of 1877, shall ever cause a regret to the distinguished men who now compose this honorable body, that they ever enrolled your name among the medical graduates of the institution.

Your pathway through life will not be all sunshine, or strewn with roses; thorns and briars will often beset you, and pitfalls and hidden rocks or quicksands are frequent, to entrap the unwary medical man. Charlatanism and illegal practices too often entice the young and thoughtless. The idea of money getting in the most rapid way, no matter what the means, is the prevailing temptation of the age; and as Trousseau has justly remarked, "Medicine is apt to partake of the spirit of the age in which it flourishes." And this same spirit has tempted medical men from the path of

duty and honor, to follow secretly or publicly practices which are crimes in the eye of the law and dishonorable to the profession. I trust that every graduate of the young, vigorous institution which you shall call your Alma Mater will commence his medical life with an exalted view of his profession, and war against all that is wrong in the profession and combat the growing evils in society. You are to become the counsellors of your fellowmen and women under the trying circumstances of life; and you may be the instrument of adding years of happiness or years of distress and misery to families. A clear judgment, sound mind, and a pure conscience are the true elements of a good physician, and it should be your constant and earnest endeavor to cultivate these elements of character. The influence of the physician on the age in which he lives, is recorded in the past history of the world, and that which has been may be again, and will be. The individual character of each one of you will be stamped on society for good or for evil. Man cannot live alone in this day, and your words, actions and thoughts, will have an influence little dreamed of, by many of you. Ideas never die; thoughts and actions live long after their originator is dead and forgotten. The man who feels the responsibility of life upon him, is more apt to live as he should live, than one who estimates himself as of but little value in the world, and lives only for himself and the gratificatio of his mere animal appetites.

Dignity, honor, assiduity, should mark the care and form the habit of every medical graduate. You sphere of usefulness is only bounded by your dil and not by the society alone in which you liv the exalted names of those that have pre whose very memory is handed from gene generation as benefactors of the human ra and glory shall last while civilized so

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If we turn to the days of the Hellenizing Jewish physicians, who inoculated the Arabs with learning on their commingling in Alexandria, and who spread the germs of free thought in the dark ages over Europe, you can obtain a glimpse of the power and influence of physicians and learning, even under the most adverse circumstances. Princes, nobles and even popes, secretly evading the denunciation of supertitious religious bigotry and employing them professionally, remunerating them liberally, and counseling with the educated and skillful Jewish physician. History informs us that it was the medical profession, then chiefly confined to the learned Jews, that stood as the beacon lights to illuminate the enslaved and superstitious minds of men, and to them belongs the credit of having first disseminated truths that banished from the world the numerous delusions which clouded and enslaved the minds of our forefathers. As an eminent modern writer has expressed it, "The moonlight has now no faries; the solitude, no genii; the darkness, no ghost, no goblin." There is no necromancer who can raise the dead from their graves; no one who has sold his soul to the devil and signed the contract with his blood; no angry apparition to rebuke the crone who has disquieted him. Divination, agromancy, pyromancy, hydromancy, chiromancy, augury, interpreting of dreams, oracles, sorcery, astrology have all gone. There are no gorgons, hydras, chimeras, except in the nomenclature of technical natural history; no familiars; no incubus or succubus. The housewives of Holland no longer bring forth sooterkins by sitting over lighted chauffers; no longer do captains buy of Lapland witches favorable winds; no longer do our churches resound with prayers against the baleful influences of comets; though there still linger in some of our noble old rituals forms of supplication for dry weather and rain—useless, but not unpleasing reminiscences of the past. The apothecary no longer says

prayer over the mortar in which he is pounding to impart a divine afflatus to his drugs. Who is there now that pays fees to relics or goes to a saint shrine to be cured? These delusions have vanished with the night to which they appertained, yet they were the delusions of fifteen hundred years. Supernaturalism, says the same author, both in the individual and in society, appertains to a definite period of life. It is shaken off as men and nations approach maturity. The child and the youth, people solitude and darkness with unrealities. The adult does not so much convince himself of their fictitious nature by reasoning on the results of his experience, he grows out of them as society has done. Nevertheless, his emancipation is quickened if he is among those who instruct his curiosity and deride his fears. It was in this manner that the Jewish physician accelerated the decline of supernaturalism in Europe. The apparition vanished as soon as the crowing of the Esculapian cock announced that the intellectual day of Europe was on the point of breaking."

"Physicians were looked upon in the days of the European darkness with wonder, fear, and hatred, by the vulgar, and by the Church with dislike, who had taught that cures, must be wrought by relics of martyrs and bones of saints, by prayers and intercessions, and that each region of the body was under some spiritual charge, the first joint of the right thumb being in the care of God the Father, the second under that of the blessed Virgin. For each disease there was a saint. A man with sore eyes must invoke St. Clara; for inflammation, he must turn to St. Anthony. An ague demanded the assistance of St. Pernel. Each and all of these saints had to be propitiated by a fee; thus the practice of imposture-medicine became a great source of profit to the clergy. The versatility of acquirement among the physicians who were taking the lead in this intellectual movement, is illustrated both by the

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Spanish and French Jewish doctors, many of them having acquired reputation in grammar, criticism, astronomy, poetry, and even in theology.

We find Frederick II endowing a medical school at Salernum, as early as 1225, where instructions were given in Greek, Arabic and Hebrew. A course of study to be followed by the pupils, and the regulations for the several examinations which the candidates for degrees had to undergo, previously to being licensed to practice either in Medicine or Surgery, might serve to instruct us, in the present day, of lightning speed and superficial training.

These regulations (many of which evince the soundest judgment), together with the privileges granted by the Emperor, had the effect of raising Salernum rapidly to the zenith of that reputation which it retained for a succession of years.

The statutes of Salernum, notwithstanding they are of extreme antiquity, are admirably adapted to the object which they had in view, and were drawn up with no inconsiderable degree of ability. Being the first of their kind, they served as a model for those which were afterwards framed for the government and discipline of similar establishments; and I regret to say that we have, in our enlightened day, fallen far short of adopting or equaling them in many respects. It may not be uninteresting, here, to allude to their leading features.

The college was placed under the protection of St. Mathew, and was styled, according to the inscription on its seal, "Civitas Hippocratis," the City of Hippocrates. The foundation consisted of ten doctors or professors whose seniority was regulated by the dates of their appointments. The examinations for degrees was conducted with the greatest strictness, and the works in which the candidates were examined as to their proficiency in their studies, were the Therapeutics of Galen, the beginning of the first cannon of

Avicenna or the Aphorisms of Hippocrates. Candidates for the degree of Doctor of Medicine were required to have attained the age of twenty-one, and to produce testimonials of having studied medicine under competent professors during the space of seven years. For admission among the body of Surgeons it, was necessary to have devoted twelve months, at least, to anatomical pursuits. The candidate was required to take, on being admitted, an oath of conformity with the laws and usages of the college, to refuse all fees or remuneration for attendance on the poor, and not to enter into any lucrative compact with a druggist or apothecary. Having sworn faithfully to observe all these regulations. a book was placed in his hand, a ring upon his finger and a laurel crown upon his head, and he was then dismissed with a kiss of Peace. Besides the statutes relating to the course of study and forms of admitting candidates to their degrees, there were many other provisions for regulating the practice of medicine within the jurisdiction of the university, and more especially the department of pharmacy, obliging druggists and apothecaries, not only to compound their medicines faithfully according to the prescription of the physician, but also to sell them at a price regulated by competent authority and not according to their own uncontrolled caprice.

Thus the school of Salernum continued for many ages to shoot a cheering ray of intellectual splendor, athwart the "Cimmerian darkness" which enveloped almost every other portion of the Christian world. The various professors were men distinguished for their learning, their talents and their assiduity.

Industry characterized the men of the profession in these earlier days, as will be seen by referring to the numerous works of Isaac Ben Soleiman—an Egyptian Jew—who wrote "On Fevers," "On Medicine," "On Food and Remedies," "On the Pulse," "On Philosophy," "On Melancholy" and "An Introduction to Logic"—

so, the Rabbi Solomon Ben Isaac, better known under the abbreviation Raschi, and called by his countrymen the Prince of Commentators, was equally at home in writing commentaries on the Talmud or in giving instructions for great surgical operations as the Cæsarian section—so much advocated by your learned Professor as a subsitute for craniotomy. He was the greatest French physician of his age.

Patient industry is your only road to fortune and to fame in the medical profession. Medicine is not yet a perfect science. Medicine has made and is making rapid strides in this your day and generation, and while you can learn wisdom from the works and teachings of your forefathers, you have a labor to perform yourselves. If you would but advance with the advancing knowledge of your profession, you must study, you must read the journals and new publications of the day. The laborious and searching investigations which have been made during the past few years in pathology alone, by the German schools, should serve to stimulate us to further examination into the causes, as well as into the remedies for the cure, of the many ills to which mankind is subject.

The microscope, the spectroscope, the ophthalmoscope. laryngoscope and sphygmograph. tell of the advances made, and may foreshadow those which we are capable of making in this noble science, which you have chosen to adopt. The exact sciences have been made to pay tribute to medicine, and he who desires to be acknowledged by his brethren of the profession must acquaint himself with the laws of optics, acoustics, hydraulics and metrics, or he will be left far, far in the rear. No longer do physicians have to guess at the locality of disease, when the electric current can determine the exact site, and indicate the cure. Although the rich and untutored civilian, may be carried away with the mystic knoweldge of a barbarian, who only feels the pulse and reads the symptoms there-

from, and who in his roasted roaches, stewed snakes, and bellies of fried lizards, or the galls of bears and the urinary calculi of the boa constrictor or other reptiles, finds his magic power of cure, or treats his hyprochondriac and nervous dyspectic, as did Macbeth's witches, to the

> Fillet of a fenny snake,
> In the cauldron boiled and baked:
> Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
> Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
> Adders folk and blind worms sting,
> Lizard legs, and owlets' wing,—
> * * * * * *
> * * * * * *
> Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf;
> Witches mummy; maw and gulf,
> Of the ravin'd salt sea shark;
> Root of hemlock diggd i' the dark;
> Gall of goat, and slips of yew,
> Silver'd in the moon's eclipse,
> Make the gruel thick and slab,
> Enchanting all.

But you must not allow yourselves to be drawn away from the only true path to knowledge. Work, work, study, think, reason, converse, write your thoughts and observations, cultivate the power of close and accurate observation, and fail not to communicate them to your fellow men when you are satisfied they are truths. Learn to express them with that degree of accuracy and fairness that correct conclusions can be deduced from your labors, and that single facts can be combined with the facts observed by others, so that general laws may be discovered or founded upon them. Life may thus be prolonged, disease arrested and death postponed. Time is valuable, and given to you not to be lost in rounds of pleasure or oblivion of dissipation. Life is precious, and is entrusted to your skill. Social happiness will be looking to you to remove the incubus that hangs around the fireside in a wan and diseased parent or child. You are to be the angel of light, the messenger of love, the almoner of health and happi-

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ness. Do not let your golden opportunities pass, improve them all, and you shall reap an abundant harvest. You must not be unmindful how exquisitely the individual man and the external world are fitted to each other, nor how

> One impulse from a vernal wood,
> May teach you more of man,
> Of moral evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can.

Your books should be a mine of wisdom and of counsel for you.

> Books we know
> Are a substantial world, both pure and good,
> Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
> Our pastime and our happiness will grow.

Books are a power from which the mind of man can receive culture and discipline—and aid in the necessary discipline of actual life; but you should not allow them to encroach too much upon your other duties, or make it an intellectual luxury to the detriment of your powers of observation, or the loss of that contemplative spirit which can find "tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing." Be not carried away by plausible theories in medicine, although promulgated by those in authority. To theorise, is at times of great use—bearing in mind the difference between the mere speculation and a true theory based upon observations. Remember also, that theories are means, not ends—as a distinguished chemist has said. "theories are the appointed means by which man may raise himself above the low level of merely sensuous knowledge to heights where his intellectual eye ranges over a boundless prospect which is the special privilege of the student to behold. What, though his vision be not always clear and his imagination fill the twilight with deceptive shapes, which vanish as the light of knowledge dawns;

yet to have enjoyed the intellectual elevation is reward enough for all its devotion and all his toil."

As the laws of Avogado and the doctrine of quantivalance have supplanted the old dualistic theory in chemistry; so you will find, as our knowledge of the laws which govern disease and the actions of drugs are more thoroughly investigated, you will be compelled to unlearn much that is now inculcated in your books—and by your teachers. If the doctrine of correlation and conservation of force should stand the test of time and the illucidation of future investigation, no man can conceive of the result that may follow in Medical Science—for as Ostead has so beautifully expressed it, "The laws of nature are the thoughts of " 'God.' If the truth which transcends experi- " ence by underlying it, is the persistance of force; it " may be proclaimed the highest law of all science— " the most far reaching principle that adventuring rea- " son has discovered in the universe; and if Star " and nerve tissue are parts of the same system— " stellar and nervous force are correlated. Nay, more; " sensation awakens thought and kindles emotion. so " that this wonderous dynamic chain binds into living " unity the realms of matter and mind, though " measureless, amplitude of space and time. And if " these high realities are but faint and fitful glimpses " which science has obtained in the dim dawn of dis- " covery, what must be the glories of the coming day? " If indeed they are but pebbles gathered from the " shores of the great ocean of truth, what are the " mysteries still hidden in the bosom of the mighty " unexplored? And how far transcending all stretch " of thought that unknown and infinite cause of all to " which the human spirit turns evermore in solemn " and mysterious worship."

I do not wish to inculcate any Utopian ideas, or to sing the usual song so frequently chanted at college commencements: that you are to look upon yourselves as

entering a profession for martyrdom to humanity, or that you are bound to your fellow-men by an indissoluble cord, which is tied only on one side, and that yours, and the other end can be shifted from hand to hand to drag you and use you as the mass of mankind desire.

The good old Bible teaches the doctrine that the laborer is worthy of his hire—so are doctors worthy of their remuneration, and a precious small remuneration it is, when compared with the other learned professions. The clergyman thinks he is poorly paid for one sermon a week and a Summer holiday of three months, by a salary of less than four or five thousand per year; and the attorney can demand a fee of thousands for a few hour's toil, but should you spend sleepless nights of watching by the bedside, and anxious days of close study, to save the life of a millionaire or his family, and charge $100 for a week's attention, it would be considered by them, by courts and by juries, extortion. My advice to you, gentlemen, is, appreciate yourself and your services, and you will soon make the community appreciate you. I need hardly say to you that charitable cases and cases of humanity will call for your aid frequently, and that it is your duty to attend to them; administer to the wants of the distressed and needful, and, if required, add all the comfort you can with a liberal hand and cheerful heart. The poor you always have with you, says the good book, and you, as medical men, will find it out. No profession has rendered, or now renders, more charity and free-will-offering of attention, as well as pecuniary aid, as the medical profession—I will not except the clergy; and it is seldom the name of a medical man is heralded in the newspapers of the day for any philanthropic act he may perform, and yet not a day passes but almost every medical man performs acts of down-right charity that the world knows nothing of. But, gentlemen, I entreat you not to de-

mean yourselves as some men have done by the medical advertisement, "Advice to the poor, free;" "Medicines only charged for."

The honest poor do not want such to attend to them, for the poor have pride, as well as the rich; but there is a kind and sympathetic way of tendering your services, without creating a feeling of dependence or poverty, to the really worthy.

"Mankind is an unco' squad," says Burns. So you will find it, and especially with reference to the medical man. Strange as it may appear, should you ever be called to attend a family when their finances are low and poverty is their possession, you will discover, that, should the revolutions of the wheel of fortune turn, and the poor become rich, you will no longer be troubled by medical attention to that family, unless you are the rich men's doctor of the neighborhood, for fashion prevails in this as well as any other social appliance. If one leader of fashion has the Chinese doctor to attend him or his family, immediately all the elite and solid families, must employ the same celestial to administer to their ailments. If you are known as the doctor to the poor men only, they may send their servant-girl or coachman to you for treatment, if they think you are a good physician, but they will invariably call upon some other for themselves. These are not fancy views, but realities, and you may as well be prepared for them now as when you have to meet with them in after years. Society of the past was in the habit of honoring their physician; once having attained the position of the family physician, no circumstance, except decrepitude or death would cause the family to change their doctor. Generation after generation had the old doctor, who looked upon the younger members as he would look upon even his own children, and often felt as much pride in the success in life, the happy marriage, and social standing of the young man or young woman, at whose

birth he had attended, as though they were bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. But how is it now? If you anticipate such to be your lot, allow me to undeceive you. Medical men, no matter what their ability or skill may be, are in this day treated like old shoes, used as long as required, then thrown off for some new comer, or one of more pretension, or one whose brass stars and tri-colored ribbons dangle on the coat lapel at evening gatherings, or one whose glittering equipage will render him more conspicuous to fashionable society.

You must not anticipate that your path will be always smooth, nor your ability always appreciated. Some will discard you because you charge, they want cheap doctors; others will cast you off because you are not the fashionable doctor, while others will not send for you because you did not obtain your degree in the country which gave them birth; thus social, sectional and local prejudices, may mar your success in life from one or several of these influences. This local or sectional prejudice is not solely confined to those of foreign birth, but it has fixed its unalterable decree on those of our own native land. The New England man wants his graduate of Harvard; the Southern, his Confederate doctor, and the Western man his Western physician, so that you are really in a bad fix, for Californians seldom want to call for a graduate of your own State. Thus proving the truth of the old adage: A prophet hath honor except in his own country. "I am frequently asked the question, have the medical graduates of these California institutions as good opportunities to learn as those of the Eastern colleges? I have invariably answered that they have better opportunities; they can dissect longer, and without the same difficulties; they have an abundance of material; they have more clinical facilities than the majority of Eastern students, and they have as good teachers; and I am inclined to believe that, as a general thing, they

have as good brains and are more studious, less given to dissipation and excesses, and more anxious to learn; and I know that you young gentlemen have passed as rigid and trying an examination, prior to your being awarded the Degree of Doctor, as any set of young men have ever had to pass in any Eastern college, and that you have passed it creditably and satisfactorily to the Faculty, and that you are as well qualified to engage in the duties of your profession as any class of Eastern graduates that have ever been presented with the degree—I trust that you all may meet with a hearty welcome and reception, in your several places of abode, and that your friends and neighbors may fully appreciate the many privations you have had to endure while in the pursuit of knowledge, and qualifying yourselves to keep dread pestilence from their hearths and homes, and push grim death far in the future to all who may call upon you for your timely advice and medical or surgical attention.

Permit me to thank our friends who have honored us this day with their presence, as we receive it as a token of your good will to the institution we here represent, and as indicative of the interest you have in its success.

Now, young gentlemen, in the language of the illustrious Pope, permit me to say,

> Know then this truth (enough for man to know),
> "Virtue alone is happiness below,"
> Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
> But looks through Nature up to Nature's God,
> Pursues that chain which links the immense design,
> Joins heaven and earth, and mortal and divine.
> Sees that no being any bliss can know,
> But touches some above, and some below,
> Learns from this union of the rising whole,
> The first, last purpose of the human soul;
> And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
> All end in love of God and love of man.

Gaylord
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